(b) if so, the details thereof and its implication on India's foreign policy?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) A joint naval exercise by the Indian Navy, with the navies of USA, Australia, Singapore and Japan, is planned to be held in Bay of Bengal during September, 2007. The conduct of the joint exercise is in consonance with India's foreign policy.

Extension of BRO roads in Uttarakhand

†1725. SHRI HARlSH RAWAT: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the details of various steps to be taken for extension of network of Border Roads Organisation in the Indian territory alongwith China and Nepal of Uttarakhand; and

(b) the details of roads to be constructed by Border Roads Organisation in this area and by when the roads which are under construction will be completed?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRl A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) Government have approved the proposal for construction of eight roads measuring 212.49 Km in length for extension of Border Roads network in Uttarakhand along China and Nepal border.

Border Roads Organisation have already commenced the construction work on two roads (16.35 Km) and work on six roads (196.14 Km) will be taken up on completion of land acquisition and necessary forest clearances. These roads are planned for completion in phased manner between 2009 and 2014 as detailed below:–

Number of roads and Length	Year of completion
One road (6.35 Km)	By 2009
One road (l0.00 Km)	By 2010
Four roads (113.54 Km)	By 2011
One road (50.00 Km)	By 2013
One road (32.60 Km)	By 2014

Defects in MBT Arjun

1726. SHRI ABU ASIM AZMI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have detected some major defects in the Main Battle Tank 'Arjun' during the course of its field trial;

(b) if so, who are responsible to find out the defects during the last 40 years and what are the details of the defects found out;

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(c) whether some defects have also been located in the imported tank engines, if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the details of the foreign countries from whom the necessary help has been sought, when it is expected to reach India and time by when Arjun Tank shall be repaired fully?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The main defects noticed during trials by Army were related to failure of piston rods of Hydro pneumatic Suspension Unit, Gunner Main Sight and Gun Control System. These defects were noticed during trials in 2005 and 2006. The cause of defects have been analysed and corrective action has been taken to eliminate the defect.

(c) Yes, Sir. Defect related to premature warning of Air filter of the engine fitted in MBT Arjun was noticed during the trial in 2005.

(d) The cause of the defect was analysed and rectified in consultation with the specialists from Germany, Belgium and France. The remedial measures have been implemented at the production stage.

Recruitment of officers and scientists

†1727. SHRI DATTA MEGHE: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the armed forces are facing difficulties in recruiting soldiers, officers, doctors and engineers and resulting several Defence Projects yet to be completed due to the shortage of scientists;

(b) if so, the efforts made by Government to meet this shortage;

(c) whether it is also a fact that in order to attract the scientists towards Defence Research and Development Organisation an assurance was given to them that they will be given promotional and other facilities; and

(d) if so, the reasons for not fulfilling this assurance and steps taken to attract officers and scientists towards the armed forces?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI A.K. ANTONY): (a) and (b) There are less applicants from trained engineers for entry into Armed Forces leading to shortages. There are no major problems of recruitment in Armed Forces for medical category of personnel, Personnel Below Officer Rank (PBOR), in general and scientists for Defence Research and Development Organisation. The completion of projects are not seriously affected by the attritions giving rise to vacancies which takes sometime for fresh recruitments.

There has been a significant increase in the intake levels in the Armed Forces. Government has devised several schemes of giving incentives and improving the service conditions.

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.